

The Drama of the Gods

by Rust Cohle

Category: Halo

Genre: Drama, Tragedy

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2014-06-16 07:38:42

Updated: 2014-06-16 07:38:42

Packaged: 2016-04-27 05:05:59

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,869

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The year is 2552. The Human-Covenant conflict is at its climax. But the war takes a back seat in this story, which instead follows Dima 'Valamai, a Sangheili Shipmaster who's just arrived at High Charity. This is a story about society, government, and fate. Reviews greatly appreciated.

The Drama of the Gods

****A/N:** I've always wanted to write something from the Covenant's point of view. Arby was my favorite character in the Halo games. Also, I was just reading Halo: 5 by the user Last Ride Of The Valkyries and decided to copy his format. Hope you don't mind man. Some notes about the setting. It's set in the year 2552, which is the same year Halo CE takes place in. The Covenant haven't found the Halos yet, and Dima is a Zealot shipmaster who has just arrived in High Charity. ******

****I** think I'm going to use these A/N's as a little reading guide which break the fourth wall a bit and show my own thoughts. Its best if you've read some of the Halo books (especially the Kilo-Five trilogy), but not necessary. ******

****Enjoy reading!****

* * *

><p>Homecoming<p>

* * *

><p>Clang, clang, went the curveblades.

Up, down, left, right! This was Dima 'Valamai's idea of a night out. First a few drinks, then some physical activity to burn it right off.

Dima went over, the tall Elite went under and Dima twisted away. Then a slash at the knife hand, a twist, a parry! Dima felt alive. A stab nimbly deflected by some grappling, a successful feint, and it was over. Instead of putting the curveblade into his opponent's ribcage, Dima opted to kick his legs out from under him. Somewhere in the background, Dima vaguely registered a Brute bouncer yelling at him.

"Watch your footwork," Dima said. He sheathed his curveblade and helped the other downed Elite back up. His former adversary clapped him on the shoulder and disappeared into the crowd.

Then the chase was back on. Dima heard the two Brutes coming for him before he saw them. He turned when they were close enough. Dima gave the one to his right a swift punch to a nerve cluster and danced away from the left. He pushed through the mob of bar patrons. People looked at him with anger, excitement, or disbelief. Within ten seconds he was back on the bright High Charity streets and the bar owner was shouting at him to never come back.

Not a bad way to start off a trip to the capital, thought Dima. The last time he was here, he'd been in swaddling clothes. Now, he was a fully-fledged Zealot of the Covenant.

The thought made Dima laugh. High Charity was very different from what he was used to. Claustrophobic military ships, the spartan barracks of a warrior crÃ"che, the temperate lushness of his estate in Sanghelios. The burnt vistas of a human world. Dima called those places home. They nurtured him and made him lean and strong.

Yet, the bright lights and metal of High Charity did have their own appeal. He liked the energy and cosmopolitanism. Unlike many Elites, Dima didn't aspire to being a stoic warrior-monk. It's pointless trying to be manly and moral for its own sake, he reasoned. All personal codes should derive from pragmatism, and if you're going to follow rules it ought to be for the right reasons.

Dima flagged down a Brute driving a taxi ghost. The Brute hesitated, but eventually slowed to a stop and let him get in. The Brute asked him where he was going and Dima told him, and that was that. The driver spoke good Sangheili. Comes from living in the capital, Dima supposed.

As a general rule, Elites don't like Brutes, that's putting it lightly. Especially given recent political events, the tensions were running high between the two species. Dima found it all pathetic and boring. The Elites' pride should not come from useless ceremonies and the favor of the Prophets, but instead from their own traits. The speed of their warriors, the acumen of their commanders and the wisdom of their Councilors. Dima felt that his kind had grown soft from hundreds of years of dominance. Reminded him of the fat, corrupt, gravity-belt wearing Prophets who ruled the Covenant. It would do them good to finally have some competition.

Dima was rather fond of the Brutes, truth be told. They were strong, smart, and, once you got their respect, unendingly loyal. He ran an unsegregated outfit back on his ship. Only the more stuck-up Elites complained. Whether it was his reputation or genuine acceptance Dima didn't know and didn't care.

Besides, the Prophets loved it. They always feared Elite nationalism, so the unsegregated ship pleased them. It helped them overlook his unreligious tendencies. The ship, as well as his shooting skills and his sword arm. Contrary to popular belief, especially it seemed amongst his generation of Elites, becoming a Zealot isn't much correlated to the strength of your faith. Otherwise, every expert prayer and skilled Prophet ass-kisser would be wearing gold and Dima would still be a minor. No, the Prophets were corrupt but they were experienced in statecraft. They needed good soldiers like Dima to fight their unjust war against the humans, and elevating all the brown-nosers would only result in the Covenant's rapid radicalization and then fracturing.

Which made the Human-Covenant War odd. The Covenant had fought against myriad species before, and every time they were either quickly reduced to serfdom or integrated within the Covenant's ranks and supported as a member species. A religiously motivated war of extermination wasn't the Prophets' style. It was sloppy, terrible for the economy and brought all the worst elements of society to the forefront. The blindly zealous and cruelly violent became favored for their compliance while the wiser men were pushed to the sides. The zeitgeist was submission in politics and fervency in war, which deeply disturbed Dima.

He was still stewing on this issue when the Ghost arrived at his stop. It was one of High Charity's high end military hotels, reserved for naval commissioned officers. The Covenant was so militarized that there were hotels exclusively for soldiers. Dima vaguely remembered having heard good things about this one. Not that it mattered, he was assigned to it.

He thanked the driver, paid with his soldier's card, and exited the Ghost. The hotel was one of the prettiest buildings he'd ever seen. A single silver-armored Honor Guard stood by the main entrance next to the two Unggoy door openers.

The Honor Guard said something into a communicator, then approached Dima. Dima suppressed the urge to take a combat stance and instead greeted the Honor Guard politely. The Honor Guard didn't return the gesture and instead ushered him into a civilian-model Spectre.

"You're late, Shipmaster," said the Honor Guard. "It's not wise to keep the Councilor waiting."

"The Councilor can go fuck himself," said Dima with a wave of his hand. "After all I've done for that arrogant fool, the least he can do is wait a little while longer."

The Honor Guard snorted. "Noted. The Councilor is no fool, but even if he was, you ought to show respect to a man of his status. In any case, what goes on between you and your father is none of my business. Just watch your tongue, Dima."

Dima leaned back into his seat and sighed. Cushions, that wasn't something he was used to. "Enough of this talk, Honor Guard—I don't need ethics lessons from a stranger." A pause. "Tell me about the holy city. It's the first time I've been here since I was born."

Dima settled into a comfortable position and listened to the Honor Guard speak. The man clearly loved this city, and Dima could see why as they pulled onto one of the main roads leading to its government district. The city's architecture was undoubtedly unmatched by any other in the entire galaxy. Its streets were beautiful and immaculately clean. And above it all, High Charity possessed an unmistakable gravitas. The city felt ancient, and powerful. For a moment, all of Dima's misgivings were washed away and replaced by a pure, heartwarming awe.

"May the Covenant persist for a million more years."

"Aye, brother," said the Honor Guard. "It will."

In the distance, a single enormous purple structure rose out of the impressive skyline. It was sleek like the corvette Dima commanded, with the stability and mass of an assault carrier. Dima had never seen it with his own eyes, but he had heard of its majesty from others. All those descriptions paled in comparison to the real thing in front of him.

"Is that building what I think it is?" asked Dima. But he already knew the answer.

"The Hall of Union," the Honor Guard said with pride. "The Council Chamber lies within."

Dima tried to imagine his father's face. Not the armored man he saw in holograms or videos, or the authoritative voice giving orders, but the way he saw him as a tiny child before being sent to Sanghelios to become a warrior. He remembered little. A stern face, the immense height, an upright posture. The rest was shadow.

He would be meeting Councilor 'Valamee soon.

* * *

><p>AN: So we are introduced thoroughly to Dima 'Valamai, who is badass but also quite intelligent and a critical thinker. It's not important to the story, but he commands a stealth corvette and rather than operating in a naval fashion doing ship to ship fighting, it's a special operations ship and he's had a distinguished career frequently leading troops on the ground. I imagine him as a practical person who isn't overly proud and greatly values integrity. What do you think?*

**I also hope the descriptions of High Charity are as awesome to you as they are to me, and not distracting. High Charity is the center of the massive and powerful Covenant Empire and I wanted to impart that feeling. The descriptions are all dramatic irony because we all know High Charity gets completely taken over and defiled by the Flood in Halo 2, so you're supposed to feel a little sad reading about Dima's wide-eyed amazement at finally seeing the Holy City. **

**Some of the main conceits of the story are also introduced in this first chapter. The decline of the Sangheili race and how they've grown soft and reliant on the Covenant. The irony of the High Prophets starting the Human-Covenant War to keep the Covenant together. The lack of relevance of higher concepts like religion, racism, and tradition to a man on the front lines like Dima. And, of

course, the idea that the Covenant are not evil, and in many ways they are just like humans. It's why I put in scenes of Dima doing things like having fun, paying for a taxi ride, and appreciating the cityscape. **

**Hope you liked it. I don't have a solid idea of where the story's going, so feel free to offer your input on what I should do for the plot and characters. And as always, reviews on my writing are always appreciated. **

Cheers,

Rust Cohle

End
file.